



Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

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The Healthy Journey

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INFLUENZA: THE FLU

This year it is important to know a little more about the flu. The flu has been in the news. It is a respiratory illness, usually caused by flu viruses Types A, B and C. At this time of year everybody is usually talking about the *Seasonal Flu*. This is the flu that usually starts to make people sick in late fall and continues until winter is over. This flu usually stops spreading from person to person once the warm weather starts in spring.

You have probably heard on the news that there is a new type of flu around called the *Influenza A/H1N1 Flu* (sometimes called *swine flu*). It is different from the usual flu because before this year it had not been a cause of sickness in humans. It is also different because it can occur all year long. Both types of flu will be around this fall and winter. Both can make you sick. It is important to know about both of them. You should know how to protect yourself and your family from the flu. You should also know what to do if you or your family gets the flu.

The H1N1 Flu

The H1N1 flu is a new flu virus in people. It is called the *swine flu* because this flu virus is a little like flu viruses that can make pigs sick. You cannot get this



This is a picture of a flu virus. Credit: CDC/Drs EL Palmer & ML Martin

virus from eating pork or pork products. It is spread from person to person just like the seasonal flu. This flu started spreading early last year and now has spread around the world. It has spread so fast because it is new in humans and our infection-fighting system (the immune system) has no way to protect us. Most of the time, the H1N1 flu is a mild illness. But just like the seasonal flu it can cause serious illnesses like bronchitis and pneumonia and death. There is a new vaccine (flu shot) to prevent this flu. This vaccine is different from the flu shot for the usual flu. To be protected from the seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu you must get two different flu shots. One shot will not protect you from both types of flu.



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Tips for Staying Healthy

Flu Vaccines. The *Seasonal flu vaccine* is available now from your doctor's office, local public health clinics, and many local pharmacies including CVS, Rite Aid, Wal-Mart, Walgreens, and some supermarkets including Giant, Safeway, and Weis. You should get this shot as soon as possible.

The **H1N1 Flu Vaccine** will be available in October. It is a new vaccine that has just been approved by the government. It is very important that people at high risk for getting sick from the H1N1 flu get this shot as soon as possible. The people at high risk include pregnant women, all people from 6 months through 24 years old, and people 25-64 years old with weak or damaged immune systems or chronic medical illnesses like diabetes mellitus or asthma. Babies younger than 6 month old are at very high risk of getting sick from the flu but cannot get flu shots. If you live with or take care of an infant younger than 6 months old, you and anyone in contact with the baby should get flu shots to protect the baby from exposure to the flu.

Nasal spray flu vaccine A few years ago scientists developed a way to get flu protection by turning the flu shot into a nasal spray. It is called FluMist. People aged 2-24 years old can use the nasal spray. Pregnant women, people allergic to eggs, and people with kidney disease, diabetes mellitus, lung diseases, or weak immune systems cannot use FluMist.

Flu vaccine side effects. The flu vaccine can cause side effects. These are usually mild. You may feel pain at the spot of the injection and sometimes a little redness that goes away shortly. You may also feel tired or have muscle aches. These symptoms will only last a very short time. FluMist can also cause a runny or stuffy nose, headache, cough, or fever. You should talk to your health care provider before you get a flu shot of any kind if you are allergic to eggs or if in the past you have had a reaction to a flu shot.

Here are three easy steps:

- (1) Wash your hands frequently.
- (2) Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- (3) Stay away from people who are sick.

Practice respiratory etiquette

Everyone should not only protect their own health but those of others. One way to do this is to mind your manners when you cough or sneeze.

Use your elbow or sleeve to cover your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze just like you see Ms. Tonya doing in this picture. This keeps the germs out of the air where others can breathe them. It also keeps the germs off your hands so you do not spread the germs if you shake hands with someone or use the phone or touch a doorknob.



When you blow your nose or use a tissue, throw it right away and then wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand cleaner that has alcohol in it.

Usual flu symptoms

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| » Body aches | » Headache |
| » Chills | » Sore throat |
| » Fever | » Runny or stuffy nose |
| » Cough | » Vomiting or diarrhea |

What to do if you get sick

If you do get sick with the flu, it is likely to be a mild illness. It will get better if you take care of yourself by doing the following:

- Drink plenty of liquids. Clear liquids like water, broth, sports drinks are good.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Stay home from work or school until you are free of fever for at least 24 hours.
- If you are pregnant or have a chronic illness like diabetes mellitus, asthma, emphysema or heart disease, call your doctor to see if there are any special things he or she would like you to do.

Complications: When to see the doctor

You should go to see a health care provider if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or vomiting or diarrhea that is not getting better
- High fever that won't go away

The flu and your MRV examination appointment

If you are sick with flu symptoms, please call Ms. Bridget Cromwell at 443-250-1403. She will reschedule your appointment. If you come to the MRV and

our medical staff thinks that you may be coming down with the flu, they will send you home with another appointment so we do not risk your health or the health of others.

Free Flu Shots

The Action for Community Enrichment Coalition & Baltimore City Health Department will provide free flu shots this fall and winter. Call 410-396-4454 for further information.

Useful Web Sites

www.cdc.gov
www.nih.gov
www.flu.gov
www.dhmf.state.md.us/swineflu/

Free flu shot schedule**OCTOBER 2009**

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday, October 21; 10 am–4 pm | Baltimore Hebrew, 7401 Park Heights Ave—21208 |
| Saturday, October 24; 10 am–2 pm | Bethel AME Church, 1300 Druid Hill Ave—21217 First Corinthians Baptist Church, 3512 Powhatan Ave—21216 |
| Friday, October 30; 10 am–4 pm | The Hippodrome Theatre-Roll Up, 12 N Eutaw St—21201 |

NOVEMBER 2009

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Friday, November 6; 10 am–2 pm | Enoch Pratt Public Library, 400 Cathedral St—21201 |
| Thursday, November 19; 10 am–4 pm | Baltimore Hebrew, 7401 Park Heights Ave—21208 |
| Tuesday, November 10; 10 am–4 pm | Oriole Park at Camden Yards–Warehouse 6th Floor 333 W. Camden St—21201 |
| Friday, November 20; 9 am–1 pm | Waxter Center for Senior Citizens, 1000 Cathedral St—21201 |

DECEMBER 2009

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, December 9; 10 am–4 pm | Palladium, 2900 Liberty Heights Ave—21215 |
| Friday, December 11; 10 am–2 pm | Enoch Pratt Public Library, 400 Cathedral St—21201 |
| Friday, December 18; 9 am–1 pm | Waxter Center for Senior Citizens, 1000 Cathedral St—21201 |

DO YOU HAVE A SWEET TOOTH?

If you do, you're not alone. In 2007 the average person consumed 100 pounds of sugar and other caloric sweeteners. Sugar itself is not bad. In fact it can be an important ingredient to help with the flavor and texture of many foods we eat. And eating a "treat" now and again is okay too. Problems arise when we consume too much, often without realizing it. Any excess calories we take in are stored in the body as fat. Tooth decay is another problem that can happen when eating foods high in sugar. Bacteria in the mouth use sugar to produce acid that harms teeth.



So oral hygiene is extremely important after eating, especially after consuming sweets, soft drinks and other sugar containing beverages. Like all other types of food, the key for eating sweets is moderation.

Sugar comes in many forms

When people hear the word *sugar*, most automatically think of table sugar. The familiar white sugar, called sucrose, is only one of many types of sugar found in our foods. Others forms of sugar occur naturally in foods such as fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

Food labels can be puzzling

You can look at the food label to see how much sugar is in a particular item. But when you read the ingredients on a food label, don't just look for the word *sugar*. Other ingredients on food labels are also a form of sugar. Look for the following ingredients to know if you are eating added sugar:

- » Brown sugar
- » Corn sweetener
- » Corn syrup
- » Dextrose
- » Fructose
- » Fruit juice concentrates
- » Glucose
- » High-fructose corn syrup
- » Honey
- » Invert sugar
- » Lactose
- » Maltose

- » Malt syrup
- » Molasses
- » Raw sugar
- » Sucrose
- » Sugar
- » Syrup



When possible look for foods that do not have these names listed as one of the first three ingredients. This will help reduce the added sugar in your diet.

Foods with added sugars in American diets include:

- » Regular soft drinks
- » Candy
- » Cakes
- » Cookies
- » Pies
- » Fruit drinks, such as fruitades and fruit punch
- » Milk-based desserts and products, such as ice cream, sweetened yogurt and sweetened milk
- » Grain products such as sweet rolls and cinnamon toast



Ways to limit your intake of added sugars

- » Become knowledgeable about the sugar content in foods. Below is a chart that displays the amount of sugar in foods commonly eaten.
- » Drink water instead of sweetened beverages; add a twist of lemon or lime.
- » Or try diet sodas, sugar free iced teas, and 100% fruit juices without added sugars.
- » You can also substitute for soda with a mixture of ½ 100% fruit juice and ½ seltzer water, or just seltzer water.



- » Try fresh fruit or raisins in cereal instead of sugar.
- » When you can, eat fresh fruit, or fruits canned in their own juice. Many canned fruits have added sugars or syrups that contain a lot of sugar!
- » When baking, try your recipe with one-third the amount of the sugar in the original recipe.
- » Top pancakes or waffles with fruit and powdered sugar instead of syrup.
- » Try dairy products such as yogurts and ice creams sweetened with non-caloric sweeteners.
- » Make your own salad dressing – many commercial ones contain added sugar.
- » Try fresh fruit, vegetables, or popcorn for a healthy snack without the added sugar.
- » Look for peanut butter without added sugar

Diabetics beware

If you are diabetic, you still need to watch your added sugars! Just because a sugar is natural does not mean it is safe to consume in high amounts.

Flavor your food without using sugar

To lower your use of sugar, you can increase the sweetness of some foods by adding different spices instead of sugar such as:

- » Add cinnamon to hot cereals;
- » Add spices such as nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice, mace or ginger to mix up your coffee;
- » Add nutmeg to cookies and rice;
- » A touch of vanilla can sweeten coffee, puddings and baked goods;
- » Carrots seasoned with ginger or sweet potatoes with cinnamon.

You can experiment with flavors starting with a small amount, and then increase it if you enjoy the taste. Another idea is to mix the spices, again starting with small amounts. This can enhance the flavor of your foods without adding calories.

| Food | Amount | The amount of sugar in these foods = | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| | | # Of individual sugar packets | Teaspoons of sugar |
| Regular soda | 12 ounce can  | 12 |  |
| Gatorade | 20 ounce bottle | 12 |  |
| Snickers bar | Regular size | 10 |  |
| Fruit juice drink | 8 ounces (1 Cup) | 9 |  |
| Glazed doughnut | 1 medium  | 5 |  |

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

THE HANDLS HEART TEAM

As you know, instead of measuring the thickness of your carotid artery in your neck, this time we will plan to do echocardiograms to study the structure of the heart. The echocardiogram, also called an Echo test for short, is an ultrasound of the heart. This test gives several pieces of important information about how well the heart is functioning. This test will show the direction and speed of the blood as it moves through your heart. We will also be able to measure the size of the four parts of the heart called chambers. The Echo will also let us see the thickness of the heart's walls. We will look at the pumping power of the heart to see if it is normal, mildly lowered



or very low. Finally, we will be able to see the valves of the heart. The Echo will help us see the state of your heart's health. This is very important especially if you have high blood pressure or are at risk for developing it. It is also important if you already have heart disease or are at risk for heart disease.

We are happy to introduce the new HANDLS cardiologist, Dr. Harry Silber. Dr. Silber has joined us to work with Ms. Mary on the Echo test. He will also be the doctor who looks at your EKGs (electrocardiograms). Dr. Silber is a cardiologist at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center. Dr. Silber received his doctor of medicine from Tulane University in New Orleans. Dr. Silber is not only a heart doctor but also an engineer. He has developed many tools to help other doctors study the heart better. He even has a patent on one of his inventions. He is the perfect person to study the mechanical function of the heart. We will start the ECHO test in October.

PARTICIPANT TRACING & TRACKING SPECIALIST

Ellen Berman is the HANDLS Participant Tracing and Tracking Specialist. Her primary responsibility is to help us locate all HANDLS participants who are temporarily or permanently lost to follow-up. As you know HANDLS is a 20-year longitudinal study that has over 3700 participants who return for a follow-up examination every three to four years. One of our goals is to be sure that all of our participants have the opportunity to return to the medical research vehicles for their follow-up examinations.



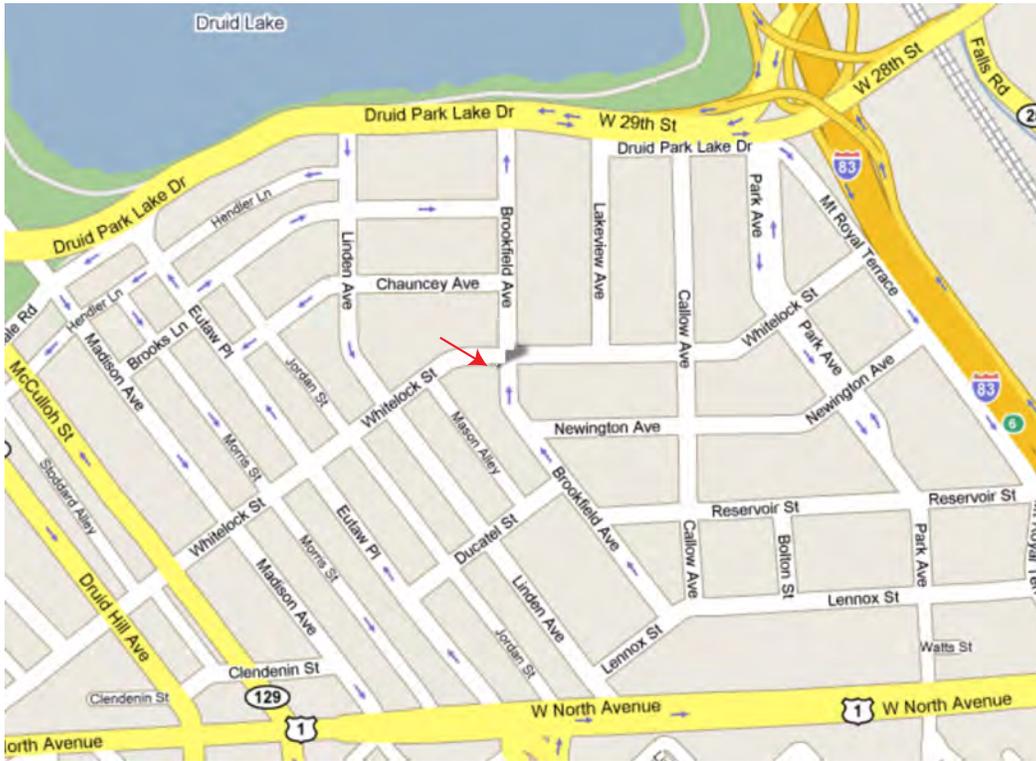
Ellen comes to us with a strong background in community survey research. She has been conducting research interviews in urban communities for almost 10 years. She is in the field every day knocking on doors, talking with family, friends and other contacts you gave us permission to reach, in the event that we are unable to locate you. Ellen is very good at finding participants locally, but is particularly skilled at locating participants who have moved out of state and forgot to communicate their move to the HANDLS staff. In the short time Ellen has been here, she has reached and scheduled follow up visits for participants who moved to places like South Carolina, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Indiana, Tennessee and even Puerto Rico.

On a personal note, Ellen is an animal activist and spends her free time rescuing and finding medical treatment and safe homes for feral cats. She also enjoys water sports and is currently attending college to complete a BA degree in social work.

If you see Ellen around the neighborhood, be sure to say hi! Oh, and let's make her job easier... don't forget to send in your change of address card when you move!!

OUR PRESENT LOCATION

The HANDLS mobile medical vehicles are parked at 901 Whitelock Street in Reservoir Hill at the intersection of Whitelock Street and Brookfield Avenue.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Have you moved? Are you planning to move?

It is important to us that we know exactly how to contact our participants. HANDLS is a longitudinal study. We will examine the same participants approximately every 3 years over the next 20 years.

We would like you to let us know if you have moved or if you are planning on moving soon. You may call us toll-free at 1-877-677-9538 and we will take your change of address information over the phone.

If you prefer, you may complete the change of address form and mail it to us at:

HANDLS Study Change of Address
National Institute on Aging
5600 Nathan Shock Drive - Mailbox 6
Baltimore, MD 21224

Our continuing contact with you is the key to the HANDLS study. Thank you so much for taking time to let us know how to stay in touch with you.

| HANDLS Change of Address | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Old address | |
| New address | |
| Old area code & phone number | |
| New area code & phone number | |
| MRV location at last visit | |

The Quarterly Newsletter for the HANDLS Community Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

The purpose of this study is to learn about changes in health over time. Using our medical research vehicles, we want to study as many people with different backgrounds as we can. We want this study to help us understand healthy aging by examining the effects of different backgrounds on changes in health over time. The information that we gather will help improve health and prevent disabilities. We want to do this for people from all backgrounds, particularly those in poor and minority communities.

**For information about our study call 1-877-677-9538
or visit our website *handls.nih.gov***



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